

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT  
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CIA MINING

JENNINGS: And now Central America, Congress and the CIA. CIA Director William Casey went to face a very angry Senate Intelligence Committee today. Afterwards, senators said Casey admitted he could have done a better job of informing them about the mining of Nicaragua's harbors. That is why Senator Moynihan said again yesterday he would resign as vice chairman of the committee. After Casey's apologies and press from his fellow senators, Moynihan has changed his mind.

JENNINGS: Richard Threlkeld has a status report on the CIA tonight. Once again, the agency's image is pretty badly tarnished.

THRELKELD: No secret war was ever less secret than the one the CIA is running against Nicaragua. Its secret army, the so-called contras, seem to show up on the TV news every night. The CIA might as well be bankrolling the Los Angeles Raiders. The president won't talk about it. PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN: That's a subject I will pick another time to talk about.

THRELKELD: But everybody else is and saying not very nice things about the CIA's handiwork mining Nicaragua's harbors. REP. THOMAS P. O'NEILL (D-Mass.): America is a country that abhors terrorists, and that certainly is an act of terrorism.

THRELKELD: The last time the CIA became such a cause celebre was in 1975. In hearings chaired by the late Senator Frank Church, the CIA was called to account for a number of misdeeds and ultimately punished in the Carter years. Half its staff and close to half its budget were blue-penciled. The Reagan administration raised the CIA's budget to an estimated \$1.5 billion a year and brought in as director Mr. Reagan's campaign manager and close friend, William Casey, to put the CIA's 18,000 employees into fighting trim and get back in the business of covert secret action. DAVID WISE: Both in number and in scope and size, the covert operations have increased. The budget of CIA has increased as well, especially in the covert area.

THRELKELD: As author and CIA-watcher David Wise notes, the CIA is now secretly active in at least a dozen countries around the world. Yet from Nicaragua's Puerto Sandino all the way back to the Bay of Pigs, covert action has often come back to haunt the CIA and whoever was president. MORTON HALPERIN (Center for Nat'l Security

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